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LETTER DATED 8 JULY 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to present to you the attached article from the Times of London, dated 7 July 1994.

May I ask you for your kind assistance in circulating this article as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

Annex

THE TIMES THURSDAY JULY 7 1994

UN protects Serb image abroad by veiling misdeeds

FROM JOEL BRAND IN SARAJEVO

THE United Nations mission in Bosnia has deliberately withheld information which, in its view, would be damaging to the public image of the Bosnian Serbs, interviews with several UN officials and officers have disclosed.

Recent incidents have highlighted what amounts to a UN policy partly to shield the Serbs from further international condemnation. Taken as a whole, the incidents show a pro-Serb bias in statements by the UN and raise questions about its credibility. The incidents include the way in which the UN reacted to the killing of a British soldier by Serbs ten days ago.

The most recent occurrence involved a UN helicopter fired on and hit by Serbs, north of Sarajevo, on Tuesday. A single bullet pierced the cockpit and damaged the French aircraft's radio. Serb authorities are refusing to grant permission for UN helicopter flights over parts of the country they control and have threatened to shoot down aircraft violating the ban. A UN official said yesterday that there was no indication which side fired on the white-painted aircraft. However, another UN officer said privately that the attack clearly came from the Serb side of the front line.

In the case of the British soldier shot dead by Serbs in Gorazde on June 26, a UN official said the attack was played down because of who fired the shot.

"If the Bosnian army had killed that soldier, the UN would have made a big deal about it," the official said. "But because it was the Serbs, not much was really said. It is not just or right, but the way the UN seeks to solve this is to follow the easiest path and that means the Serbs win."

Serb terrorism against Muslim and Croat civilians in northern Bosnia, many of them elderly, has also gone largely unannounced by UN officials, including Monday's assault on a group of non-Serbs outside a UN relief agency's office in Banja Luka.

During the Serb assault on Gorazde in April, Western countries, including Britain, were aware that Yugoslav army troops and tanks played key roles, but they withheld the information. One tactic of Western governments, unwilling to back the Bosnian government with military force, has been to describe the conflict as a civil war and play down the involvement of Croatia and Serbia.

The Bosnian army and the Croats are to ask the UN to return their impounded arms, it was announced yesterday. The weapons are now needed to fight the Serbs.

Yesterday the Serb and Muslim-led armies launched fresh shelling attacks in north-central Bosnia as their leaders considered a peace plan backed by Western and Russian mediators. The plan, drawn up by America, Russia, Germany, France and Britain, drew a cautious response from the Serbs while President Izetbegovic said his government would probably support the plan.

London: Serb and Muslim leaders yesterday sharply attacked the international Geneva peace plan, but did not reject it outright (Michael Binyon writes). Haris Silajdzic, the Bosnian Prime Minister, said it had "serious deficiencies" and Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, called it an "American diktat".